

# BACKCOUNTRY LIFESTYLES



The Logan Log House dates to the late 1780s and was found in Greenwood. It was later moved to Ninety Six National Historic Site.

## INTRODUCTION

When the first white settlers arrived in the western Carolinas, they found a terrain which had been home to Indians for generations. The land was rugged but rich in forest and fields. Unlike those settlements along the ocean, where supplies were transported by ship, these frontier families had only the supplies they carried with them. The first necessities were shelter and food.

The first shelters were rude cabins of round logs. In the areas where the trees were cut, they planted corn. But the immediate need for food made it necessary to hunt and kill the many animals in the area. Because accuracy was required, the early settlers carried long rifles, and to butcher the larger animals where they fell, they carried large knives. Meat was cooked over the open fire on a green wood spit, or was stewed in an iron pot hung over the fire.

The forests supplied the wood for the few pieces of furniture to make the cabin more comfortable. Chairs and bedsteads were fashioned from small trees, and tabletops were made from sawn lumber. Even the household utensils were carved or fashioned from branches and small trees. Plows and farming utensils were made the same way. When the light faded, or when bad weather kept the men close to the cabins, the time was spent building.

Frontier women had little leisure time. There was food to prepare, candles to make, cows to milk, butter to churn and animals to feed. Those who had sheep sheared the animals, carded the wool into strands and spun the strands into yarn. Clothing had to be fashioned from the wool or linen when it was available. Later, cotton was available. Women used roots and vegetation to make dyes to give color to their material.

Animal hides were scraped and tanned, providing leather for harnesses, leggings and moccasins. Many frontiersmen wore deerskin hunting clothes.

Life was hard, and children were expected to participate in the daily activities. Girls helped with the household chores while the boys accompanied the men in the fields and forests. Even very young boys were proficient hunters.

These early settlers had few neighbors and no doctors. When an injury occurred, they dealt with it in the best manner they could. Sickness was a constant threat, and herbal medicines were administered. Many women died in childbirth, and many children died in infancy. In addition to

natural disasters, Indian attacks were sporadic as the settlers pushed into the Indian territory.

Who were these frontier settlers, and where did they come from?

Many of the early settlers were Scots-Irish, Scots lowlanders who had fled from the border areas of Scotland and England to escape the border wars. The Scots first settled in Ireland, but were dissatisfied with that area since they were staunch Presbyterians among the Irish Roman Catholics. They emigrated from Ireland to the New World and traveled down the Old Wagon Road from Pennsylvania to the hills of the Carolinas. Fiercely independent, they were very adaptable, and they learned quickly to survive in this wild country. They modified the Scandinavian/German log cabin to their own use. They were the quintessential frontiersmen.

The lives of these people centered on families, homes, hunting, farming and herding. As the settlers pushed west, there was increasing conflict with the native people, the Cherokees, who resented the encroachment into their territory.

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## Lifestyle: Revolutionary War Era Clothing



**GOAL:** To provide the opportunity for students to identify clothing of the Revolutionary War Era in comparison with modern clothing.

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Revolutionary War Era children wore many layers of clothes depending on the season. Children living on plantations wore better quality clothing than those in the backcountry. Girls wore long dresses, pantaloons, dust caps (mob caps) and aprons, while boys wore knee-knockers and ruffled shirts.

### PRE-SITE ACTIVITIES

1. Show pictures of clothes worn by the Revolutionary War Era children, including children living on plantations and those living in backcountry homes.
2. Have students research Revolutionary War Era clothing, using library and computer resources.

### ON-SITE ACTIVITIES

1. Have students try on clothes worn during the Revolutionary War Era. Explain why each piece of clothing was necessary.
2. Have children discuss the pros and cons of Revolutionary War Era clothing.
3. Time children dressing to determine how long it takes to dress in Revolutionary War Era clothes.

## POST-SITE ACTIVITIES

1. Make drawings of the different types of clothes worn during the Revolutionary War Era.
2. Have students make and design their own paper dolls of this period with appropriate clothing.
3. Write a story featuring Revolutionary War Era clothing in comparison to modern day clothing.
4. Write a sequence of dressing in Revolutionary War Era clothes.
5. In considering the advantages and disadvantages of such clothing, discuss the potential of death or injury when cooking over an open fire.

## OBJECTIVE/PROCESS STANDARDS

The student will identify the names of the clothes of this period and how long it took to put on the clothes.

The student will view pictures of Revolutionary War Era clothing and modern-day clothing and compare the two. The student will try on clothes worn by a Revolutionary War Era boy or girl.

**STRANDS:** Social Studies, Visual Arts, Language Arts

## STATE OBJECTIVES/STANDARDS:

**North Carolina: Visual Arts: 2.3, 4.1, 5.6, 5.1; Language Arts: Grade 3, Goals 3.03, 3.05, 4, 5; Grade 4, Goals 4,5; Grade 5, Goals 4,5; Grade 6, Goal 6; Grade 7, Goal 6; Grade 8, Goal 6**

**Social Studies: Grade 3, Goals 2,7.3; Grade 4, Goals 1.2, 5.1, 11.1; Grade 8, Goal 1.3**

**South Carolina: Language Arts: Grade 8 - IV-A, B, J; V-B Social Studies: 3.2.5, 3.2.6, 4.1.7, 8.1.2, 8.2.5 Visual Arts: Components 2-3**

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## Early American Activities



**GOAL:** To give students the opportunity to relate how early settlers used the knowledge of their ancestors to make some of the necessities needed for survival in the early South Carolina frontier.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Early Settlers in South Carolina had to make many of the supplies they needed for everyday life. Frontier women were usually left with many of these chores.

One thing that women had to do was to make soap and butter for the family, but some things were made for the simple pleasure of the women. One of these was the pomander ball. Fragrant

pomander balls were often hidden in baskets or placed in different parts of the house to hide unpleasant odors resulting from cooking. Colonial women sometimes placed pomander balls in their handkerchiefs when traveling. These sweet and fragrant smells could hide the odors found in the streets they traveled.

## **MAKING SOAP**

### **Materials:**

newspaper  
rubber gloves  
14 oz. vegetable oil  
6 oz. lye (also called caustic soda)  
candy thermometer  
wax paper  
scissors  
3-quart pot (use stainless steel, glass, or enamel — NOT aluminum)  
wooden spoon  
1-quart pot 32 oz. bottle of olive oil  
2 cups water (rain water works well)  
shoe box  
shirt cardboard  
knife

### **Steps:**

1. Cover the working area with newspaper. Heat the olive oil and shortening together in the large pot over low heat. Stir with the wooden spoon.
2. Dissolve the lye flakes in the water on the small pot. (*DO NOT let the children handle the lye!* Wear rubber gloves to protect the skin. If any comes in contact with skin, wash with cold water and rinse with vinegar or lemon juice.)
3. Use the thermometer to check the temperature in both mixtures. When the oil reaches exactly 96 degrees, pour the lye mixture into the oil. Pour slowly and evenly and stir steadily — not too fast or too slow. (This is the trickiest step — if the temperature and stirring speed are just right, the oil and the lye will come together to make soap.)
4. Continue stirring for at least 15 minutes until the mixture is thick. If lumps develop, put the pot on very low heat and continue to stir.
5. Pour the mixture into a shoe box lined with wax paper. Cut a piece of shirt cardboard to fit in the box and cover the mixture.
6. After a day or two, cut the soap into small bars. Place them on wax paper so air can circulate around the pieces. Let the bars age for three or four weeks, then invite the children to use them as hand soap.

## **MAKING BUTTER**

### **Materials:**

1 pint of heavy, chilled cream  
clean baby food jars and lids  
soda crackers (optional) knife to spread the butter

Directions:

1. Fill the jars to 2/3 full with the cream.
2. Cap the jars tightly.
3. Have the students take turns shaking the cream.
4. When a hardened butter ball appears in the jar, stop shaking.
5. Drain the remaining liquid from the jar. This remaining liquid is buttermilk.
6. Take the butter and spread it on the crackers.
7. Enjoy eating the butter!!

## **MAKING POMANDER BALLS**

Materials:

apple, orange, lime, or lemon  
whole clove  
cinnamon  
ribbon  
piece of cheesecloth  
piece of yarn or string  
toothpicks  
dish  
hairpin

Steps:

1. Use the toothpick to prick holes in the skin of the fruit. Place a clove in the hole. Repeat this process, making sure the fruit is covered with the cloves. Be careful not to break the skin of the fruit between the cloves.
2. Stick the tips of the hairpin into the fruit at the stem; then roll the fruit in a bowl of cinnamon.
3. Place the fruit on the cheesecloth. Fold the corners of the cheesecloth together and twist them around the hairpin. Tie the folded top of the cheesecloth using a piece of the yarn or string; then tie a ribbon bow around the yarn.
4. Allow the fruit to dry in a cool, dark place for a few weeks, or until the fruit hardens. Prick small holes in the cheesecloth. Then place the pomander ball in a closet or in a drawer.

## **OBJECTIVE/PROCESS STANDARDS**

The student will be able to describe or demonstrate the making of soap, the making of butter, and the constructing of a pomander ball.

The student will be able to arrange steps or directions in sequential order. The student will relate how important these early activities are to our society today.

**STRANDS:** Science, Math, Social Studies

## **STATE OBJECTIVES/STANDARDS:**

**North Carolina: Science: Grade 3, Goal 4; Grade 5, Goal 2; Grade 7, Goal 4 Math: Grade 3, Goal 2.06; Grade 4, Goal 2.07; Social Studies - 8.1.2**

**South Carolina: Science - Grade 3-I-A, B; IV-A, Grade 4 - I-A, B; Grade 5 - I-A, C; IV - A;**

**Grade 6 - I-A; Grade 7 - I-A; Grade 8 - I-A Math - Grade 3 - V-A, C; Grade 4 - V-A, B, F; Grade 5, - V-A, B, D, F; Grade 6 - V-A, B, C, D, F; Grade 7 - A, D, E, H, I; Grade 8 - V-A, D, E, H**

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## Colonial Correspondence Material



DRAWING BY GREGG GLYPH

**GOAL:** To help students gain skills in reading and writing historical journals and in construction and use of related material culture such as quill pens and journals.

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

A number of Colonial-Revolutionary Era Americans kept journals. George Washington was among these. Much of his journaling was in the form of agricultural notations and records. For the Siege of Ninety Six, a number of people made journal entries or completed journals later in life. William Seymour, of Delaware, wrote a journal about his experiences during the Southern Campaign and his involvement in the Siege of Ninety Six. Journals such as these are first-hand accounts (primary source materials) of the past. They are invaluable sources because they give important facts about the Revolutionary War Era from one involved in the events. The reader should be cautious, however; even though the journal-writer was closer to historical events, he or she might show prejudice related to specific events. Memory lapses or reliance on folklore might also contribute to misinformation.

In addition to the content of the journal, colonial writing and penmanship are important topics of study. Writing technology had changed little over the years; early Americans still used quill pens similar to those scribes used in the Middle Ages. Journals were often bound, and some later published, as with the William Seymour journal.

The following activities address the making of quill pens, ink blotters, and parchment journals as well as journaling and penmanship.

### PRE-VISIT ACTIVITIES

1. Have students prepare a feather quill pen as follows (**adult directions**):  
Boil the quill to harden it.  
Cut the tip of the quill at a 45-degree angle.  
Split the longer side middle-ways from the tip about  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch.

2. Or, have students prepare a toothpick quill pen as follows (student directions):  
Draw, color, and cut out a feather shape from construction paper.  
Attach to a toothpick with tape or glue.

3. Have students prepare a sand-shaker ink blotter as follows:

Using a hammer and small nail, punch several holes in the lid of a baby food jar.  
Place sand in the baby food jar.

4. Have students prepare a parchment journal as follows: Cut parchment or ivory-colored paper in half.

Fold the cut papers in half. Using 2 punchers from one of the 3-hole punchers, set one 3-hole puncher to punch 5 holes.

Punch 5 holes in the folded sides of the papers, punching a few pages at a time.

Assemble a journal by using a parchment cover and several ivory pages; line up to the punched holes.

Cut a string approximately 36 inches long.

Tie one end of the string to a small paper clip.

In the left hand, hold the journal with the holes at the top.

Hold the tail of the string with the left thumb.

Push the paper clip through the first hole on the left.

Pull the string taut. Bring the paper clip and the string over the top and push the paper clip through the first hole again.

On the backside of the journal, at the second hole, push the paper clip and string from the back to the front.

Flip the paper clip and string to the back.

Continue this pattern through the fifth hole.

At this point, the string on the left will be on the front, and the string on the right will be on the back. Also on the front, there will be string between the second and third holes, and the fourth and fifth holes. Push the paper clip in and out of the holes from the fifth hole to the first one.

Tie the strings together and trim any excess.

Use the quill pen and ink to write the title on the front. The journal, quill, and ink blotter can be used for any written assignments.

### **Materials needed for the above activity:**

**Quills** – wing feathers from large birds such as geese or turkeys often available at arts and craft supply stores, and from historic sites and catalogs (often already prepared as pens) – or toothpick and construction paper  
Fine sand

Sharp knife (adult use)

Baby food jars

Hammer and nail

Ink (Sometimes available at historic sites, arts and craft stores, or make your own.)

**Parchment Journal Parchment paper** – ½ sheet for each journal

Ivory copy paper

String

Small paper clips 2-3 hole punchers





5. Have students read examples of eighteenth century journals and letters, noting the style of language and spelling. Refer to sources such as Understanding Colonial Handwriting (Stryker-Rodda) for a history of quill pen use and examples of colonial writing.

6. After their study of Colonial and Revolutionary War Units, have students create a Journal based on a fictional eighteenth-century character. Suggestions on developing your character:

How old are you? What is your name?

Name and describe your family members.

What do you wear? What is your daily routine?

It is 1775. There is talk of a coming war. You must decide which side you will support. Use historical reasons to support your decision.

It is 1780. The war has moved into South Carolina. Write about your thoughts and feelings on a war that is now in your area.

Have students use historical or present-day penmanship (cursive) to complete the journal.

### ON-SITE ACTIVITIES

1. Discuss the siege as you walk the interpretive trail and have students write a journal entry on what their fictional character might have experienced in battle or camp life. 2. Have students research and write a fictional journal based on an actual historical person present at the Siege of Ninety Six.

### POST-SITE ACTIVITIES

1. Have students portray their character's thoughts and feelings about the British surrender at Yorktown and subsequent events related to Patriot and Loyalist participants (for example, Loyalist land was often confiscated, and many migrated to places such as Nova Scotia).

2. Discuss with students the advantages and disadvantages of handwriting using quill pen and ink in contrast to present-day writing. What technologies have led to the decline of penmanship? Discuss the importance of good penmanship, journaling, and letters in a technological age.

DRAWING BY GREGG GLYPH

### OBJECTIVE/PROCESS STANDARDS

The student will identify problems and dilemmas in the past. The student, with teacher assistance, will construct a quill pen, sand-shaker ink blotter, and parchment journal. The student will read eighteenth-century journals and letters and contrast language and spelling to that of today. The student will create a fictional eighteenth-century character and construct a journal in proper historical context. The student will research and write a journal based on an historical battle participant. The student will select a fictional or historical figure and describe his or her feelings about the British surrender at Yorktown. In completing the above, the student will use correct contemporary or historical penmanship.





**STRANDS:** Social Studies, Language Arts, Theatre/Drama

**STATE OBJECTIVES/STANDARDS:**

**North Carolina:**

**Social Studies: Grade 3**, Goals 2.1- 2.3, 3.1-3.3, 4.2, 6.1-6.2; **Grade 4**, Goals 1.2, 2.3, 1.1-1.3, 12.1-12.2; **Grade 8**, Goals 3.2, 3.3, 4.2, 4.4-4.5

**Language Arts: Grade 3**, Goals 2.03-2.05, 2.07, 3.01- 3.03, 4.09-4.10, 5.01-5.08; **Grade 4**, Goals 2.03-2.05, 2.07-2.08, 3.01-3.03, 3.06, 4.09-4.10, 5.01-5.09; **Grade 5**, Goals 2.03-2.05, 2.07, 3.01-3.03, 4.09-4.10, 5.01-5.08; **Grade 6**, 1.01-1.02, 4.01-4.03, 5.02, 6.01- 6.02; **Grade 7**, Goals 1.01, 4.01-4.03, 5.01-5.02, 6.01- 6.02; **Grade 8**, Goals 1.01-1.02, 4.01-4.03, 5.01-5.02, 6.01-6.02 **Theatre: Grades 3-8**, 2.1-2.3, 3.2-3.3

**South Carolina:**

**Social Studies: 3.1.2-3.2.2, 3.8.1, 3.2.7; 4.1.7; 8.1.2, 8.2.6** **Language Arts: Grade 3**-1-B, C, D, G; IV-A, B, D, E, F, G; V-B; **Research – Goal B; Grade 4**- B, E, G; IV- A, B, D, E, G, H, I; **Grade 5** - I- B, D, F. IV-A, B, C, D, E, H, I; **Grade 6** - I- B, C, G, I, J; IV-A, B, C, E, F, G, I, J, K; **Grade 6** - I-D, G, I, J, M, N; IV- A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, K; **Grade 8** - I-B, F, G, H, K, M, N; IV- A, B, C, D, E, F, H, L, I **Drama - Components 2-3**

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## Herbs and Medicinals in the Backcountry

SCHIELE MUSEUM



**GOAL:** To introduce students to backcountry lifestyles related to the Old Ninety Six District and the Siege of Ninety Six.

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In the backcountry, the early settlers had few neighbors and practically no doctors. When an injury occurred they dealt with that in the best manner they could. Sickness was a constant threat, and herbal medicines were administered because herbal remedies were the only medical knowledge available. Since the earliest of times, knowledge of herbs, both cultivated and wild, had been passed down from generation to generation by oral traditions. Settlers had to rely on these oral traditions or trial and error. Most families in the eighteenth century had a kitchen garden, which contained vegetables as well as herbs.

Doctors were few and far between, and the only requirement to become a physician was to call oneself a doctor. In addition, in most families there was usually one woman who possessed the knowledge necessary to treat the family.

Many women died in childbirth, and many children died in infancy. Simple illnesses could worsen into fatal diseases even with the use of extensive herbal remedies. It was a difficult way of life by present-day standards.

The isolation of towns and neighbors was one preventative to the spread of infectious diseases, but when soldiers from different geographical areas came together in camp, disease went on the rampage. The younger soldiers were more susceptible to the illnesses, while the older soldiers seemed to have a better immunity to the illnesses. As an example of the killing power of diseases within the soldiers' camp, musketry or bayonet killed 1,000 Americans, 1,200 received battlefield wounds, 6,000 more were interned in prison camps, while a staggering 10,000 lost their lives to illness.

Physicians sometimes knew little of diseases, and even less of bacteria and viruses. There were no diagnostic tools such as stethoscopes and thermometers. Little was known of the inner workings of the body, so doctors made diagnoses by simply observing the patient. Patient treatment for diseases included better food, cleaner water, laxatives, emetics (for vomiting), enemas, blistering (a caustic solution was applied to the skin to raise blisters; it was thought that it drew the inflammation out of the body), and bloodletting (again, drawing the sickness out.)

Herbal remedies for minor illnesses and injuries included teas, poultices and ointments made from the leaves, bark, roots, seeds, flowers, and fruit of various plants that were available in the nearby woods or that could be grown in the settler's herb gardens. Willow for pain or fever, sage for coughs and colds, comfrey for bruises and broken bones, peppermint or chamomile for upset stomachs, ragweed for bee stings, onion and mustard poultices for coughs and colds are among some of the herbal remedies that the settlers used.

### **PRE-SITE ACTIVITIES**

1. Using slides, book pictures or plant cuttings, have the students identify plants and ask the following questions: What is this plant called? (Perhaps include the scientific name, if appropriate)

Is this a helpful or harmful plant? (Stress the importance of knowing how harmful some plants can be - i.e., poison ivy, mushrooms, etc.)

In what sort of conditions would this plant grow?

What part of the plant could be used as medicine (the leaves, bark, root, flower, seeds, etc.?)

2. Discuss the uses of herbal medicines in colonial times and today.

### **ON-SITE ACTIVITIES**

1. Bring resource books on plant identification. Have students search Ninety Six National Historic Site for plants that could be made into medicine. Students should list the plants they found and their possible uses. ***They may not pick the plants.***

2. Provide small limbs to re-enact supporting a broken bone with a pair of sticks. Carry the play-acting further by discussing what might happen if the application of medicines to the wound did

not work and the condition worsened.

### **POST-SITE ACTIVITIES**

1. Have students compose a journal of a soldier who has been wounded and describe his experience with medicine and healing. Alternately, the journal entry could be of a mother caring for and healing a sick child.
2. Have students compile a booklet or brochure of helpful and harmful plants in their own local area.
3. Discuss the scientific properties of plants.

### **OBJECTIVE/PROCESS STANDARDS**

The student will relate common plants to the development of the medicines that might have been used during the time of the Siege of Ninety Six.

The student will use cognitive skills in answering questions posed by the facilitator.

The student will use science skills and knowledge by identifying plants and the parts of the plants that were used to make medicines.

The student will use sensory skills to see, feel, taste and smell plants and medicines.

The student will describe how the lifestyles of the early settlers and soldiers were related to the ecosystem of the area.

### **STRANDS: Social Studies, Science, Language Arts**

### **STATE OBJECTIVES/STANDARDS:**

**North Carolina: Social Studies: Grade 3**, Goals 2.3, 7.3; **Grade 4**, Goals 1.3, 5.1, 11.1; **Grade 8**, Goal 1.3

**South Carolina: Language Arts: Grade 5** - IV-A, B, C, D, G, I; V; **Grade 6** - IV-B, E, I: V; **Grade 7** - I-I, L, N; II-C; IV-B, G, I; **Grade 8** - I-L, N; II-B; IV-A, B, F, J **Science - Grade 3** - I, A, B; II - A, C; **Grade 4** -I- A, B: II-B; **Grade 5** - I-A, B; II-A, B; **Grade 6** - I, A, B; II - **Fungi and Plants** - A, B, C; **Muscular and Skeletal Systems** - A; **Grade 7** - I-A; II-D; **Grade 8**, I-A; II-A